

The California Department of Education's (CDE) goals are developed in alignment with the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) Prevention and Early Intervention (PEI) component with a focus on preventing the development and exacerbation of serious mental illness among children in California's educational system, and intervening when they are identified to be in need of mental health services.

MHSA funds are being used to: promote understanding among Local Education Agencies (LEAs) and Special Education Local Plan Areas (SELPA's) about the linkage between early intervention and positive outcomes for students needing mental health services; support training and technical assistance efforts that result in education professionals' ability to recognize early signs of potentially severe mental illness; assist in efforts to identify effective programs, strategies and services for students in need of mental health services, as well as those that promote stigma and discrimination reduction, and disseminate this information to the education community.

CDE – Learning Support and Partnerships Division (LSPD) activities reported to DMH for the period 7/1/08 – 12/31/08 are as follows:

a. Brief summary of the major activities performed during Fiscal Year (FY) 2008-09

Goal 1: Promote partnerships that support the development and implementation of strategies that result in the improvement of mental health outcomes for students in California's K-12 educational system.

Objective 1a: Oversee the implementation of activities related to CDE contract # CN 077750 with the Sacramento County Office of Education (SCOE) to develop and disseminate school-based mental health resources.

- The contract with the SCOE was finalized in August 2007. SCOE and CDE staff had several meetings prior to contract finalization to discuss the transition between last year's project and this year's project, as well as to discuss products to be developed as part of the contract.
- The SCOE proposed that the first step for product and resource development be to hold an expert forum so that any products would be grounded in state of the art research. This concept was proposed after the University of California Los Angeles (UCLA) Center for Mental Health in Schools released the findings from their national initiative, *Transforming School Improvement to Develop a Comprehensive System of Learning Supports: What District Superintendents Say They Need to Move Forward*.¹
- The expert forum was held on November 6, 2008 at the Sheraton Grand Hotel in Sacramento. There were twenty-nine participants from the fields

¹ This document is available on the Internet at <http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/pdfdocs/superintendentssay.pdf>.

of state and local mental health and education, consumer and advocacy organizations, WestED, California Institute of Mental Health (CiMH), as well as the University of San Francisco and the UCLA.

- A meeting summary with recommendations and next steps, which include the development of a white paper, was distributed to participants on December 17, 2008.
- Product development is anticipated to occur from February to April 2009, in time for finalization of products before the end of the contract period. The SCOE has already developed two products, including an annotated list of resources related to Prevention and Early Intervention (PEI) and an analysis of ten county PEI plans.

Objective 1b: Develop and implement strategies to expand and enhance the CDE's Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) program, and that further collaboration between the mental health and education communities at the state and local level.

- On August 23, 2008, CDE/LSPD staff attended a site visit to Berkeley High School's health center, along with DMH and CDE/SED staff. The visit included a meeting to share information with the California School Health Centers.
- On September 26, 2008, CDE/LSPD staff participated in a telephone conference call with the UCLA Center for School Mental Health to discuss ways in which the two organizations can work together to advance school mental health.
- On October 3, 2008, CDE/LSPD staff presented information about current MHSA PEI efforts and the CDE's PEI projects at the County School Nurse Consultants' Meeting.
- On November 19, 2008, CDE/LSPD staff attended a planning meeting for the 2009 School Wellness Conference. The 2009 conference is sponsored by the California School Boards Association (CSBA) and is broadening its focus this year to include more partners. CDE/LSPD staff offered to assist by disseminating information via the listserves, as well as by providing input for sessions or speakers with school mental health expertise. The 2009 School Wellness Conference will be held on October 6–7, 2009, at the Marriott Anaheim.
- On November 21, 2009, CDE/LSPD staff met with representatives of the various offices within LSPD to solicit input and recommendations into the CDE's future MHSA PEI projects. This process is being used to prioritize ideas for the next project, as well as increase information sharing within the division about mental health issues in schools.
- On December 12, 2008, CDE/LSPD staff met with the California School Health Centers Association, to discuss ways that both organizations can partner around school mental health issues, as well as the CDE's

application to the National Assembly on School-Based Health Center (NASBHC) for school mental health pilot training.

- The two CDE divisions that work on MHSA efforts have met periodically to discuss joint efforts. Meetings occurred on December 4 and 18, 2008, and additional meetings are planned for 2009 to discuss integrating division efforts.

Objective 1c: Collaborate with the DMH to ensure that county offices of education and local education agencies within their counties know about and participate with county offices of mental health in the development of MHSA plans.

- From May through November 2008, CDE/LSPD staff provided regular ongoing technical assistance and feedback on the development of drafts of the Student Mental Health Initiative Request for Applications (RFAs) including review of a final draft in November 2008.
- On September 11, 2008, CDE/LSPD staff attended the CiMH Policy Forum, "Mental Health and Education: Creating a Partnership for Healthy School Communities," held in Palo Alto. On July 21, 2008, CDE/LSPD staff provided background information about the CDE/LSPD's MHSA projects to CiMH. CDE/LSPD staff also provided information to CiMH on school-based resources to assist in the development of the CiMH's Web site on resources.
- CDE/LSPD staff attended the interagency partner meeting held on September 23, 2008.
- On October 1, 2008, CDE/LSPD staff responded to an inquiry to the CDE Communications Division office from the California State University Sacramento (CSUS). CDE/LSPD staff provided information and resource materials about suicide prevention, including information about the DMH's Office of Suicide Prevention, and referred CSUS to the Department of Public Health (DPH) in response to epidemiological questions about youth suicide rates.
- CDE/LSPD staff met with DMH PEI staff several times during this reporting period to further refine collaborative efforts between the two agencies, and to discuss the work plan. Meetings/calls occurred on September 17, October 17, and December 9, 2008. Both agencies are scheduling to meet bimonthly in 2009.
- On December 16, 2008, CDE/LSPD staff has participated on a follow-up call with CiMH to discuss ways to continue the efforts that began with the September 11, 2008 policy forum.
- At the request of the DMH, CDE/LSPD staff participated on a panel of state agency representatives at three regional roundtables on PEI, sponsored by the CiMH. The panel focused on building capacity across different systems and included representatives from primary health care, aging, the court system and education. These roundtables were in

Emeryville on July 17–19, 2008; Universal City on July 28–29, 2008; and Sacramento on July 31–August 1, 2008.

- In December 2008, CDE/LSPD staff submitted an application in response to the NASBHC's RFA. This RFA provides an opportunity for the successful applicant to participate in a two-day pilot training for state education agencies (SEA), local education agencies (LEAs), and their collaborative partners. Over 42 letters of support were submitted along with the application. Notification of the outcome of this grant award was received on February 23, 2009.

Goal 2: Increase knowledge and capacity about effective prevention and early intervention programs, services, and strategies for LEAs, County offices of education, and others working with students who experience, or are at risk of, mental health problems, including suicide risk.

Objective 2a: Provide technical assistance within the CDE and to the field to increase knowledge of the MHSA and improve coordination of mental health prevention and early intervention efforts.

- On July 11, 2008, CDE/LSPD staff participated on a call to discuss the CDE's MHSA projects with local alcohol and other drug prevention providers. This call took place in response to a request from staff at the Department of Alcohol and Drug Programs, Prevention Services Division.
- CDE/LSPD staff participated in a conference call titled, "The Public Health Approach to Mental Health" on July 30, 2008. This call was sponsored by the National Technical Assistance Center for Children's Mental Health at the Georgetown University Center for Child and Human Development.
- CDE/LSPD staff participated in training on Epidemic of Suicide Among Adolescents and Young Adults sponsored by the Adolescent Health Collaborative, in Sacramento, on August 4, 2008.
- In November 2008, CDE/LSPD staff revised a document on MHSA and Student Assistance Programs, per the request of staff in the Safe and Healthy Kids Program Office of the LSPD. This document was originally developed in February 2007, and it has been in the review process within the CDE.
- CDE/LSPD staff disseminates information about research, best practices, and emerging issues that may be of interest to the education community through a listserve. Information is sent out on a bimonthly basis (approximately) to educators and others who are interested in school mental health issues.

Objective 2b: Coordinate with the DMH and the Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission on the identification of programs and approaches that will result in positive outcomes for California's children and youth, including suicide prevention programs and strategies.

- In August 2008, CDE/LSPD staff began working on suicide prevention issues with the CDE intern, a graduate student at California State University, Sacramento. Activities will include assessing options for implementation of the Jason Flatt Act, consistent with strategies in the Statewide Suicide Prevention Plan.
 - On December 9, 2008, CDE/LSPD staff met with DMH staff to discuss next steps and priorities for collaborative efforts on suicide prevention between the two agencies. The CDE plans to support the dissemination of the plan by developing a joint letter between the CDE and the DMH to accompany distribution of the plans to county offices of education and LEAs. This project is planned for spring 2009.
- b. Identify two or three activities or accomplishments that are considered highlights and help further the intent of the MHSA (e.g., achieving system change)
- In December 2008, CDE/LSPD staff submitted an application in response to the NASBHC's Request for Application (RFA). This RFA provides an opportunity for the successful applicant to participate in a two-day pilot training for SEAs, LEAs, and their collaborative partners. Over 42 letters of support were submitted along with the application. Notification of the outcome of this grant award was received on February 23, 2009.
 - The CDE convened an expert forum of education and mental health partners to assist in grounding product development activities that will be underway during 2008-09. This forum was held on November 6, 2008, at the Sheraton Grand Hotel in Sacramento. There were 29 participants from the fields of state and local mental health and education, consumer and advocacy organizations, WestED, CiMH, as well as the University of San Francisco and the UCLA. A meeting summary with recommendations and next steps, including the development of a white paper, was distributed to participants on December 17, 2008.